

# **USACE 2012 Report**

## **Frequently Asked Questions/Comments**

### **Q. What is the biggest change between Alternative 7 in the last report and Alternative 8?**

- R: The invaluable comments from across the Corps and our external partners initiated a number of changes in the report. Some of the more significant are:
- ❑ We defined the principles on which our preferred alternative was based.
  - ❑ We revisited the concept of One Headquarters, and recommended, "Act as one headquarters".
  - ❑ We revisited the functions of the MSC, and emphasized and clarified some.
  - ❑ We moved the MSC recommended structure back to Civil Works and Military Directorates.
  - ❑ We recommended keeping the Regional Support Teams in Washington, but that they become a Washington asset rather than the MSCs.

### **Q. What are the next steps now that we have a new alternative?**

R: The Final Draft report will be the basis of a meeting on 23-24 April of the Corps Senior Leadership (General Officers, Members of the Senior Executive Service and HQ Separate Office Chiefs). The purpose of that meeting is to get understanding and agreement on principles, recommendations, a working Preferred Structural Alternative and next steps. Results of the meeting will be sent to the Corps and posted on the web site by 28 April. It is recommended that the summer be spent doing functional area assessments and defining the business process at the Headquarters and MSCs. Information developed will then be used to develop an Objective Organization that will be provided to the Chief for his approval in September. Corps employees and external stakeholders, partners and customers will continue to be involved and included in the process. More information is in the main report and Appendix H.

### **Q: How will implementation of the preferred structural alternative affect me personally?**

R: Desired outcomes of the preferred structural alternative include: reduction in duplicative activities, delegation of authority to the lowest effective level of review and approval, and defining the roles and responsibilities of our three echelons (Headquarters, Divisions, and Districts). Accomplishment of these objectives will result in a more efficient work environment for all employees that also improve the delivery of quality products and services to our customers. Any potential direct impacts to individual positions will be determined via functional area assessments that are based on the key principles that will be adopted by the Senior Leaders during their upcoming April meeting.

**Q: What was the composition of the study team?**

R: The USACE 2012 team was headed by a Divisional SES and consisted of 6 field members and 6 HQ staff members. The field members were 4 Divisional staff, 1 District staff and 1 laboratory staff. Members are listed in the Project Management Plan for the report. The Project Manager was Steve Stockton – CESPDCM. Product Delivery Team members included: Mike Adams – CECC-C, COL John Carroll – CENAD-DC, Liz Fagot – CERE-ZB, Judi Greer – CENWD-CM-C, Michael Kingsley - CECS, Tony Leketa – CESAD-CM, COL Karen Lloyd – CERM-ZB, Julie Marcy – ERDC-EE/Emerging Leader, Davis Moriuchi – CENWP-PM, Carol Sanders – CEPA, Julalee Sullivan – CEHR-D, COL Mark Tillotson – CEMP-ZC, Sean Wachutka – CEPG-P. Consulting services were provided by Richard Margolies, Maccoby Group.

**Q: There seemed to be a “lack of “ consultation with external experts and sources.**

R: While this statement is generally true, the team did use a consultant from Maccoby Group and used the recent “Volker Report” (#1, Appendix L) to assist in the analysis of the Corps. The team also used most of the previous reorganization reviews as a quality check to the processes used and proposed organization.

**Q: Why did the USACE 2012 team not address the number of Districts and MSC’s?**

R: The Chief of Engineers’ intent for the USACE 2012 Team was to:  
*“Focus on the total business process of the MSC headquarters in the operational environment of PMBP and review the roles of the MSC headquarters in relation to HQ USACE and the districts.”*

Based on this direction, it was not within the scope of this study to question the number of Districts and MSCs. The team focused on the roles and responsibilities for both the USACE HQ and the MSC HQs, trying to identify redundancies and overlap. As was explained in the report, the next steps will assist in identifying the exact sizing of Headquarters offices in Washington and the divisions based on the approved concepts in this report.

**Q: Why use “7 S Model”?**

R: The “7 S Model” was used to design USACE 2012, and in addition three different models were used to evaluate the alternatives. The “7 S Model” is explained on page 3 of the Main Report. Change is only valuable if it improves the product to the customer. Therefore, change should include more than just structural form. The team selected the “7 S Model” which is one of several techniques to systematically analyze all aspects of an organization. The USACE Learning Advisory Board is also using this tool.

**Q: Why does the report have a growth of HQ Staff at the expense of MSC staff?**

R: The study alternatives did not reference specific numbers of personnel in any of the organizational structure. It was generally proposed that some of the functions and responsibilities of smaller MSC offices could be purchased from Districts. In the case of the Regional Support Teams proposed under the last, they were to remain under the command and control of the Division Commander, with their size and functions yet to be defined. In Alternative 8, those RSTs are part of the Washington Headquarters. Some elements of the MSC might grow if we power down authorities and move to Regional Management Concept. As stated above, the specific size of both the MSC HQ and the USACE HQ would be determined during the next steps.

**Q: Some people thought the Preferred Alternative recommendation in the draft report was a “done deal”. Is that so?**

R: In the spirit of “synergy”, the team was seeking “... that third alternative which is generally better than ...” what the USACE 2012 Team recommended. It is only through effective and continuous consultation that this can be achieved. The report is a pre-decisional consultation seeking honest feedback. The team collected all comments and analyzed the feedback. All comments were considered in the preparation of the final draft. Even then, there is additional work needed to get to the Objective Organization.

**Q: Why won’t comments be requested after the initial report is modified?**

R: The team used only one open comment period in order to meet the timeline directed by the Deputy Commanding General. This feedback was used to modify the Alternative 7 proposed draft. This new proposal will be presented to the USACE leadership (all General Officers and SES’s) for final comments prior to presenting a final draft proposal to the Chief for approval. The open process will continue, however, as we move toward defining the Objective Organization.

**Q: What is the relationship of USACE 2012 to the other initiative that are ongoing - Army’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave and the President’s Management Initiative (outsourcing)?**

R: The genesis of the study was based on affordability of staff. But as the team started its research, they quickly realized that the opportunity to change was both necessary and timely. There are several Congressmen that have proposed legislative Corps reform. And in the administration, the USACE HQ is aggressively working the President’s Management Initiative, Competitive Sourcing, and the Army’s version, which is The Third Wave today. This administrative effort to downsize government through outsourcing could reduce staff within USACE. The USACE 2012 team understands that change is unsettling, and that this adds to the stress everyone is experiencing already as a

result of the threat of outsourcing. But, the timing of this study has the opportunity to promote a most efficient organization that in the long run may save critical staff.

**Q: What determined the composition of the initial feedback group – those asked to respond to the 10 questions?**

R: The USACE 2012 team wanted to obtain a sampling of opinions and ideas from across the Corps workforce and from key customers and stakeholders with our primary focus on the Washington Headquarters office, Division offices, and national interests. Although diverse opinions were desired, the feedback was not intended to be a statistical representation of these groups, or to be a comprehensive satisfaction survey. Personal interviews were conducted with representatives of the Executive Branch, Army, Air Force, Department of Defense, other governmental agencies, and private industry and associations. Interviews were also conducted with over 80 Corps employees from Headquarters, Divisions, Laboratories, and Districts. Online responses were solicited from all current and alumni Emerging Leaders, and from Headquarters and Division personnel with over 350 responses received. Senior Corps employees who were interviewed were provided with the questions in advance so they could provide a consolidated staff response if desired.

**Q: Why were there so many “negative” responses from employees, customers and stakeholders in the draft report?**

R: Questions used in the interviews and online addressed areas of concern and recommended areas for improvements versus asking respondents what we were doing right. The USACE 2012 team wanted to focus on how the Corps could improve its overall service. The team viewed the responses as opportunities for improvement versus a judgment of “good” or “bad”. Some respondents described areas where they felt the Corps excelled, and examples of those comments were added to the “Views” section of the report.

**Q: Why was there no discussion of core competencies in the initial analysis?**

R: The USACE 2012 team for the draft report undertook an analysis of missions and functions for functional areas. This information has been added to the report in Appendix M.

**Q: Will the preferred alternative have a negative impact on recruitment, retention and employee satisfaction?**

R: A study team priority was to establish an effective and affordable staffing plan. More efficient use of available resources should provide more funding for training and

development of employees. Overall issues pertaining to having a capable workforce (recruitment, retention and employee satisfaction) are independent of organizational structure and will continue as part of our ongoing strategic focus on People, Process and Communication.

**Q: Why was so little analysis shown for organizations like Districts?**

R: USACE 2012 was focused on ED&M funded positions. Organizations that do not have these positions were not studied.

**Q: Won't eliminating layers of review decrease our product quality or lead to more errors?**

R: As a general rule, the USACE 2012 team feels that the traditional method of sequential, multi-layered reviews does not provide the greatest value since it typically increases review time and cost with minimal value added. Effective use of vertical and horizontal teaming during all phases (from concept through development) is key to improving product quality and reducing errors in a much more timely manner. Technology today allows for concurrent reviews, and our principle of empowerment encourages us to delegate review and authority wherever possible and effective. However, the success of all review processes relies on the level of technical ability, attention to detail, holistic assessment, and integrity used in preparing the product for review.

**Q: Will 2 corporate directorates (Civil Works and Military) in Headquarters decrease our sense of corporateness?**

R: The USACE 2012 team feels that the directorates of Civil Works and Military Programs by and large represent unique groups of customers and stakeholders, unique products and services, and unique funding sources. We were also concerned about "span of control" with having too many offices reporting to one individual. Both vertical and horizontal integration across offices using the Project Management Business Process (PMBP) will be necessary to ensuring acting as "One Team".

**Q: Will grade structure be impacted by the new organizational structure?**

R: There is always the possibility with a change in organization structure that grades of some positions may be impacted, positively or negatively. This happens because the structure itself in some cases is a contributing factor to the grade of a position, i.e. the scope of work, the number of people directly supervised, the dollar size of the program. The bottom line is that we must have a structure that will enhance our business processes and capabilities, providing meaningful work where employees will be appropriately

compensated for the work they do and ensure a structure that will allow for advancement and growth of our employees.